



Despina Ploussiou, MA, MFT

Despina Ploussiou is the **founding visionary of the Syros Healing Waves Festival**, an innovative international gathering that brings together leading clinicians, scholars, and artists to explore the intersections of trauma healing, science, and the arts, with pleasure as a vital dimension of post-traumatic recovery. Conceived from her vision and realized through the **Trauma2Therapy Institute**, which was co-founded by herself, Sofia Vasilakou and Konstantinos Plousios, the festival has positioned the island of Syros as a unique locus for global dialogue on knowledge, creativity, and post-traumatic flourishing.

Trained in both the United States and Europe, Despina is a psychotherapist with expertise in the treatment of trauma, PTSD, and Complex PTSD (C-PTSD). She earned her **Master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy** at Hofstra University, following undergraduate studies in **Psychology and Sociology** at the American University of La Verne. She has completed advanced training (Level 3) in **Internal Family Systems Therapy (IFS)** and has studied with some of the foremost figures in the field, including **Bessel van der Kolk, Richard Schwartz, Frank Anderson, Janina Fisher, and Salvador Minuchin**.

Despina has served as the **official translator and scientific editor of IFS theory into Greek**, ensuring both terminological precision and conceptual clarity. She also directs **pre-level one IFS trainings** in Greece, thereby cultivating a steadily expanding community of IFS-informed professionals. Her therapeutic orientation integrates **Jungian Sandplay Therapy, Sensorimotor Psychotherapy, Ericksonian Clinical Hypnosis, Polyvagal Theory applications, and EMDR trauma therapy**, complemented by a five-year program in **Systemic Constellation Work** (Bert Hellinger) with Dr. Dimitris Stavropoulos.

Her professional experience spans both Greece and the United States. She has worked in psychiatric clinics, public and private schools, and as a mental health supervisor at the Archdiocese of New York's Support Center for Abused Women, as well as at the HANAC Child and Family Psychosocial Program in collaboration with New York City's Child Protection Services (ACS).

Her **scholarly contributions** include the Greek translation of Dr. Frank G. Anderson's book *Transcending Trauma – Healing Complex PTSD with Internal Family Systems Therapy* (24 Grammata Editions) and the scientific editing of the Greek editions of Dr. Richard Schwartz's books, *No Bad Parts* (Papasotiriou Editions) and *Internal Family Systems Therapy* (Dioptre Editions).

Since 2004, Despina has maintained a private practice in Voula, Attica, offering trauma and grief therapy for adults, parents, and teenagers. She also coordinates self-awareness groups in collaboration with public and private institutions.

Through her clinical work, her trainings, and her vision for Trauma2Therapy, Despina Ploussiou plays a central role in bringing IFS and trauma-informed healing to Greece, bridging cutting-edge neuroscience with deeply embodied and compassionate therapeutic practice.